

a youth leader and communion stewardess. Andrea is also a member of the Yazoo City Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta and appreciates the opportunity to have a positive impact on the community through activities sponsored by the sorority.

Ms. Rucker's philosophy on teaching can be drawn from Romans 12:6–9 which speaks of a variety of gifts that may be given to each of us. She believes that if one has been given the gift to teach, that person must teach well.

Having had countless examples of top notched, no-nonsense educators, including her mother, Ms. Rucker strives every day to teach well while remembering this quote from Henri Frédéric Amiel which states, "The highest function of the teacher consists not so much in imparting knowledge as in stimulating the pupil in its love and pursuit."

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Ms. Andrea Rucker for her dedication to her community.

CONGRATULATING THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS RODRIGO COUNCIL, NO. 44 ON THE CELEBRATION OF THEIR 125TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 13, 2013

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, It gives me great pleasure to rise today to join the many who have gathered this evening in celebration of the 125th Anniversary of the Rodrigo Council, No. 44—one of the original Councils of the Knights of Columbus. Described as the "strong right arm of the Church," Councils have long been an extension not only of the fraternal order, but of the Catholic Church as well. Today, Rodrigo Council focuses its effort in service of the needs of St. Bernadette's Church, St. Bernadette School, the parishioners, the local community and charitable organizations across the country.

As you may know, the Knights of Columbus was formed when a group of men, called together by Father Michael J. McGivney in the basement of St. Mary's Church in New Haven, Connecticut, vowed to defend their country, their families, and their faith. With strength in solidarity, security in their unity of purpose, and devotion to their cause, the Knights of Columbus has grown into the world's largest Catholic family fraternal service organization.

Just a few short years following the establishment of the Knights, membership had grown at such a rate that additional Councils were established. On June 6, 1888 the Rodrigo Council No. 44 was established. Welcoming any man, aged eighteen or older, of Catholic faith, this Live Council continues to thrive today. In addition to their support of St. Bernadette's and the parish school, members dedicate much of their time to raising funds to support social and civic services throughout the community. Just this year alone their annual banquet will benefit Mount St. John's, a residential treatment facility for at-risk young men; Emergency Shelter Services, a shelter for homeless men; The Camp, a summer camp for inner-city youth in New Haven; Life Haven, a temporary shelter for homeless preg-

nant women and women with children; Farnam Neighborhood House, a thriving multi-service neighborhood center which provides a continuum of services for people of all ages; and a local family in need of financial assistance because of an illness.

The strength of any community lies within the willingness of its members to make a difference. Over the course of its 125-year history, the members of Rodrigo Council No. 44 have exemplified community service. Through their faith and their commitment, they have enriched the lives of others and made our community a better place for our families to live, learn, and grow. Today, as they celebrate their 125th Anniversary—a remarkable milestone by any measure—I am honored to stand today and extend my deepest thanks and appreciation to their members, past and present, for their invaluable contributions. They have set a standard of service to which we should all strive.

CONGRATULATING SCRIPP'S NATIONAL SPELLING BEE SEMI-FINALIST, ALIA ABIAD

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 13, 2013

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Alia Abiad, who recently participated in the Scripp's National Spelling Bee.

Alia Abiad is a 7th Grader from McClure Junior High School, and a resident of my hometown of Western Springs, IL. In addition to being a skilled tennis player and violinist for the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra, her recent performances in local and national Spelling Bees have demonstrated that she is a driven, exemplary student.

Alia diligently practices her spelling independently and with her parents every day. She also gains her edge by reading books intended for an audience well beyond her age.

Alia initially won the title of best speller at McClure Junior High, and then went on to win the Cook County Spelling Bee. In these competitions, she maintained a perfect record, spelling every word correctly.

Most recently, she competed alongside 280 of America's top spellers in the Scripp's National Spelling Bee in Washington, DC. She advanced to the semi-finals, correctly spelling 'peccadillo,' 'quiddity,' and 'hypnopompic,' before her run ended.

Alia's achievements are a reminder of how preparation, practice, and perseverance produce solid results, even when facing difficult challenges. I call on all my colleagues to join me in congratulating Alia Abiad, and her parents, for her tremendous accomplishments, and her commendable performance in the Scripp's National Spelling Bee.

THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF WEST VIRGINIA'S CASS SCENIC RAILROAD STATE PARK

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 13, 2013

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, this month marks the 50th Anniversary of West Virginia's

Cass Scenic Railroad State Park. Anyone who has ridden the eleven miles of rail in this unique concept for a park in my home State can attest to its instant attraction and appeal on so many fronts. Bundled in those few short miles are a multifaceted story of industrial might and hardworking souls that combined to make a significant contribution to the Nation's logging and lumber history. Rail enthusiasts will enjoy historical steam powered locomotives, a switchback track system to assist the trains in conquering steep elevations, and the remaining vestiges of past equipment used along the rail. Everyone will enjoy the scenic bliss and wonder of the natural beauty in which this relatively small short line, but prospering railroad is nestled in Pocahontas County.

What began with lots of hope, but little publicity, drew an extraordinary maiden seasonal crowd of 23,000 interested visitors fifty years ago to this majestic mountain and manmade wonder. Set in the midst of the State of West Virginia's Centennial year of celebration, skepticism surrounded future success.

However, since those early days, Cass has not only endured, it has prevailed as a magnet for the region's economy. Many heads, hands and hearts have been instrumental in the growth Cass has enjoyed over the last five decades.

First and foremost, there is a small contingent of dedicated and experienced Cass employees who deserve several trainloads of thanks for keeping the trains moving up and down the mountain. They are a talented bunch. Faced with broken or worn out train parts, parts not stocked nor even manufactured in decades, they set about the task at hand. Applying their honed skills and sheer ingenuity, without benefit of blueprints or plans, for 50 years day in and day out, they have kept history alive.

Perhaps no more enthusiastic group of individuals has devoted greater labors of love than the members of the Mountain State Railroad & Logging Historical Association. From sizeable restoration projects to tender loving care of collective memories of life in yesteryear, these essential partners are key to Cass's lifeblood. Operating Railfan Weekend each spring, the crew draws from the deep roots that extend from its debut weekend in 1965, but with every new year, they offer visitors something new and unique to reward their trek. And, certainly, they play a more than significant role in keeping the ever evolving horizon of West Virginia's most unique state park on track.

Mr. Speaker, I offer hearty congratulations to all those who have and are taking part in a fifty year journey that continues to gather steam and glory to celebrate an important chapter in our country's past. May the lessons preserved from our past continue to help guide our next half century. And may the chorus of Cass's steam whistles always sound a welcoming note for the Nation to pay Cass Scenic Railroad a visit.